

suddenly catch, in his eye, a glint
suggesting that he,
too, sees what the observer is thinking
sees, and does
not in the least mind, a fact that, swiftly
redressing
the balance, makes the said observer slightly
hot behind
the collar

Set, as they have now been for so many
years, against
a chosen background of such strenuous and
constant
endeavour as is a challenge to average
inconstancy of aim
and slackness of action, they provoke those
whom they
thus shame The easy retort has been to say
that they
have no souls At some stage or other, the
ascetic does
paradoxically rouse the hedonist to such an
accusation
Can it be sustained, in their case, except by
leaving out
most of the facts ? That was of course the
trick employed
by Mr Wells and his *New Machiavelh*,
written in 1911,
not long after he had flounced out of the
Fabian Society
in a pet, is the one picture of the partnership
that is familiar
to the common reader But Mr Wells is not
merely
malicious he is stupid, he leaves out the two
major premisses
that have made the life according to plan
possible and
successful

The first is the simple fact of mutual
attachment That
the Webbs are, as are few, happy—this is the
most obvious
fact about them for anyone who knows them
Some-
thing deeper than cheerfulness and warmer
than optimism
surrounds them Its warmth is its
unmistakable note
Nonsense like E T Raymond's "two
typewriters clicking

as one" could only have been invented
from reading
Here is not comradeship only, here is loving
comradeship
Sheer blindness to refuse to see it, because its
form is odd
When they were younger, what Shaw calls their
"spooning"
embarrassed some of their friends, but
behind it was a
stuff which has securely stood the test of
time The one
thing either of them really dreads is the
possibility of
separation Could he compound with
the Deity, he